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SUBJECT: TURKEY/IRAN: FM GUL'S MEETING WITH ALI LARIJANI

REF: WILSON-FRIED E-MAIL OF 5/8/06

Classified By: Ambassador Ross Wilson for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (C) MFA Deputy Undersecretary for Security Affairs Akgunay Larijani provided Ambassador an initial readout of Iranian Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Larijani's May 8 meeting with FM Gul. (Larijani's meeting with Turkish NSC SecGen Alpogan is described septel.) Akgunay reported that Turkish officials gave Larijani messages consistent with the international community's position. FM Gul was, according to Akgunay, "really open" in his remarks to Larijani. He said the situation was getting dangerous and that Iran was not the right path. Gul described the situation as akin to pulling on a thread, not thinking or realizing it may break; one can never be sure what the breaking point will be. Iran should now be careful and cooperate with the international community. Gul reportedly drew Larijani's attention to IAEA Chairman El-Baradei's reports, which document the international community's differences with Iran and which ask for flexibility and transparency from Iran. Iran should take these more seriously. Gul told Larijani. The IAEA reports are, Gul reportedly said, more serious than those issued by the IAEA right before the Iraq war about the situation there. Gul urged Iran should give them due attention and cooperate. Gul also noted that Iran has a credibility problem in the world that it needs to fix.

¶2. (C) Akgunay said that Larijani's responses and complaints tracked with Iran's public line. Commenting on Larijani's statement to the Turkish press (we have forwarded the text of Larijani's interview with NTV to EUR/SE), Akgunay said Larijani's public remarks were nearly identical to what he told the government here privately.

¶3. (C) Akgunay said he was struck that when Larijani talked, he complained mostly about the U.S. and the EU -- especially the latter, and seemed to suggest that Russia and China are not with the EU-3/U.S. Interestingly, Akgunay reported, Larijani said nothing about the Ahmadinejad letter to President Bush and was "astonished" when Akgunay asked about it based on press reports that appeared early May 8.

¶4. (C) Akgunay said that Turkey kept the discussion focused on the Iran nuclear issue, although Larijani expressed a willingness to cooperate with Turkey on Iraq and claimed to the Turks that the U.S. is talking to the PKK in Mosul and Kirkuk. Akgunay made clear that Turkey gives no credit to this assertion. (We have put out a press release denying contacts with the PKK).

¶5. (U) We will meet May 10 with MFA staff and a key advisor to PM Erdogan on the Larijani talks and will report further, as appropriate.

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<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

